

Thomas A. Jenckes House
2 Angell Street
Providence
Providence County
Rhode Island

HABS No. RI-214

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RI,
4-PROV,
114-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

THOMAS A. JENCKES HOUSE

Address 2 Angell Street, northeast corner Angell and
Benefit Streets, Providence, Providence County,
Rhode Island. Plat 10, Lot 524

Present Owner Miss Annette Ham
and Occupant:

Present Use: Dwelling

Brief Statement This is a large, brick house, built in the 1850's.
of Significance: It was the home of Congressman Thomas A. Jenckes.

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PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1852 INDENTURE: Anna Almy Jenkins conveys to Samuel Boyd Tobey all of her property for her natural life as under the will and testament of her late mother, Anna Almy. - Deed Book 128, page 85, in Providence City Hall.
- 1856 INDENTURE: Between Samuel B. Tobey and Moses Brown Jenkins: Witnesseth: "That whereas by terms and conditions of the Codicil to the last Will and testament of Moses Brown, deceased, it is provided as follows that: "Whereas my granddaughter, Anna Almy Jenkins, wife of William, since the execution of my last Will and testament has borne a son, whose name is Moses Brown Jenkins, it is my will that should the aforesaid Moses Brown Jenkins live to the age of 21 years, I bequeath to him the whole of my Homestead Farm where I now live in Providence Neck, after the lifetime of my said granddaughter, his Mother, to whom the farm is given in my said will and testament." - Deed Book 140, page 401, in Providence City Hall.
- 1856 INDENTURE: Samuel B Tobey, trustee u/w Anna A Jenkins, grant, Bargain and quit claim to Moses B Jenkins the following "...the lot on the Corner of Benefit and Angell Streets, opposite the High School being lot #524 in the Assessor's Plat #10, Together with the buildings and improvements."... Deed Book 140, page 403, in Providence City Hall.

- 1856 Moses B. Jenkins sells for \$18000 to Thomas A Jenckes a certain lot of land together with all buildings and improvements. Bounded:

W by Benefit Street 43-1/2' E by Jonathan Congdon 100'
S by Angell Street 200' N formerly David Howell
123-1/2'

being lot #524, Plat #10 and received by me through the Partition Deed between Samuel B Tobey Tr, and myself of the Estate of my Mother the late Anna A Jenkins. - Deed Book 143, Page 457, in Providence City Hall.

- 1857 Thomas A. Jenks - 27377 Brick and stone 38' x 45' part three and part four stories high. Circular Addition 3-1/2 X 16' four stories high and another addition 12 X 17' three stories high and another 13 X 16' - 1-1/2 stories high, occupied for a dwelling house. - mss. fire insurance records of the Providence Mutual Insurance Company at the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, Rhode Island.
- 1857 T. Jenckes listed at this address, Providence Directory.
- 1870 Thomas A Jenckes and wife Mary Jane sell the above property to Samuel W Peckham, all the real estate of which said T A Jenckes is now seized consisting of his estate on the corner of Angell and Benefit Streets conveyed to him by Moses B Jenkins in 1856. - Deed Book 193, page 36, in Providence City Hall.
- 1871 Samuel Peckham sells to Stephen Waterman that lot of land and BRICK DWELLING HOUSE at the N/E corner of Benefit and Angell Streets. - Deed Book 196, page 223, in Providence City Hall.
- 1871 Stephen Waterman sells for \$31000 to Anne J Ham wife of Albert E Ham the above property bounded: - Deed Book 39, page 43, in Providence City Hall:
S by Angell Street 125' W by Benefit St. &
E by Eliza B Patten 100.76 Formerly David Howell
N by Gamaliel Dwight 39' and George Bacon -
N by George Bacon 100' Deed Book 32, page 85
- 1961 Property still in the Ham Family and taxed to Miss Annette M Ham

3. Sources of information:

Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Rhode Island (Providence: National Biographical Publishing Company, 1881), p. 414.

John Hutchins Cady, The Civic and Architectural Development of Providence 1636-1950 (Providence, Rhode Island: The Book Shop, 1957), p. 140.

Anita F. Glass, Early Victorian Domestic Architecture on College Hill (unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Art, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 1960), pp. 66-67.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: Following is from the Biographical Cyclopedia of Representative Men of Rhode Island, p. 414:

Thomas A. Jenkes was born in Cumberland Rhode Island, November 2, 1818 the son of Thomas B. and Abigail W. (Allen) Jenkes.

He graduated from Brown University in 1838, then studied law with the Hon. Samuel Y. Atwell and was admitted to the bar September 24, 1840. He became a partner of Edward H. Hazard Esq., and was a most successful lawyer.

For several years he was a Representative to the Rhode Island General Assembly. In 1862 he was sent to Congress as a Representative of Rhode Island and served eight years. Among the committees he served was[was] the Judiciary and Patents of which he was the chairman. His greatest efforts were for civil reform and in carrying through the Bankrupt Law, became famous throughout the country. He succeeded in obtaining passage of the bill that made the appointment of cadets to the Military School at West Point dependent upon competitive examination. After leaving Congress he resumed the practice of law in Providence and New York.

A degree of Doctor of Laws was given him 1873 by Brown University.

His wife was Mary Jane daughter of Zelotis Fuller of Attleborough, Massachusetts whom he married in June 1842. They had five children, four daughters and a son.

He died November 4, 1875.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: Thomas A. Jenckes papers: legal papers kept at the Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence, all other papers kept at the Library of Congress, Washington.

PART I-- Prepared by Margaret Fletcher
for the Providence Preservation Society
March 1962

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: The house is one of a number of conservative "Italian Villa" type houses which follow in general the central hall plan of the Early Republican mansions of Providence. Its curving steps and reserved detail are noteworthy.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Overall dimensions: Square block 45' (five bay south front) x 38' (four bay west side), with semicircular bay 3-1/2' x 16' wide on north, with two rear wings to northeast. Three stories with basement at ground level on west on Benefit Street.
2. Foundations: Granite, regular ashlar.
3. Wall construction: Brick laid with narrow mortar joints, smooth dark red surface, running bond.
4. Chimneys: Brick end chimneys.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Basement entrance on Benefit Street with arcaded, three-bay porch, bracketed cornice and balustrade. Main entrance on Angell Street, first floor; projecting porch with square Corinthian columns, curved two-way steps, iron rail.
 - b. Windows: Six over six light double hung windows, wide molded caps with brackets. Third story heads curved into frieze of roof cornice
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Low hipped roof
 - b. Cornice: Molded cornice with denticulated bed mold and wide frieze board.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Typical central hall, four-room plan, with double parlors at the west side.
2. Stairways: Main stairway, straight run with winders at the top, open string, shadow rail, heavy newel post, turned balusters, scrolled carving on riser ends similar to Early Republican detail.
3. Flooring: Wide board floor
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, painted.
5. Doors: Mahogany doors, recessed panels.
6. Trim: Heavy moldings. Inside window shutters. Dining room walls paneled about 6' high.
7. Lighting: Electric.
8. Heating: Central heat with radiators. One-story marble mantels, semicircular curved openings, carved or paneled spandrels, flat or scrolled keystones, shaped mantel shelves.

D. Site

- a. General Setting and orientation: Northeast corner Angell and Benefit Streets, main entrance facing south on Angell Street. At sidewalk on Benefit; set slightly back on Angell Street to accommodate double flight of curving steps to main entry.
- b. Enclosures: High brick wall around yard east of house.

Prepared by Antoinette F. Downing and John H. Cady
for the Providence Preservation Society
and Osmund R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
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